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To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: microsoft settlement

I am trained as a physicist, but have quite a bit of technical expertise in computer use and work both as a High School physics teacher and as a consultant on both Windows platforms and Macintosh platforms.

Microsoft products are on nearly 100% of hard drives, particularly if one includes applications along with the Operating System (OS) involved in this case. Microsoft is clearly a monopoly.

Microsoft's dominance has grown in the last 3 years, despite the fact that Apple Computer has been one of the few profitable computer manufacturers, and that Apple has a proprietary (non-Microsoft) OS. Also, there has been the growth of a free version of Unix (a competing OS), called Linux. While Linux has gotten quite a bit of press, it has not been able to grow due to lack of commercial software packages (like Microsoft Office). Microsoft Windows (in various versions) has crept from about 90% to about 96% of the market in the last 10 years according to the IDC corporation which logs these things. This means they have grown stronger in dominance.

Microsoft has cash reserves in the tens of billions of dollars. It has monthly PROFITS in the tens to hundreds of millions of dollars. Microsoft is an extremely cash-rich, low production cost company. It can afford a lot of punishment before the punishment really stings.

There recent proposals have been insulting in that they have want to "give" a small amount of cost worth of goods, rating at suggested retail value, and services to schools. This would allow them to defacto infuse themselves into one of only a few market segments in which Microsoft does not dominate, while allowing a great Public Relations campaign, and all at very little real cost to the company. That was, in my opinion, showing contempt to the courts.

Microsoft should be required to pay billions of dollars in fines. They should not be allowed to continue practices like adopting industry standards, and then changing them. A recent example, try to use Apple Computer's Quicktime plugin with the Internet Explorer XP on Windows XP. You can't, because microsoft insists their architecture is "better." They have, in fact, disabled the internet software plugin architecture that has been around for over a decade and was introduced in Mosaic and then Netscape Navigator, I believe. It is an industry standard. All other versions of Internet Explorer use it. Now Microsoft wants to drop it.

They are mean and nasty in business dealings, and they need to be regarded as such. They are not "evil," but will use anything to their advantage. Please do not let their final "punishment" end up being a reward.